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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

NFAC #1726-81
26 March 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM :
Acting National Intelligence Officer for USSR-EE

SUBJECT : Monthly Warning Assessment: USSR-EE
(Meeting held on 19 March 1981)

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1. During the past week we have held a regular Warning Meeting and an additional Community meeting devoted primarily to the fast-breaking Polish crisis. As of 23 March, Community representatives felt that the current Polish crisis could potentially be defused, although no one could be very confident of this judgment. With the subsequent decision by Solidarity to schedule a warning strike on 27 March and a general strike on 31 March to protest alleged police brutality in Bydgoszcz, the prospects for the establishment of martial law -- with a possible follow-on Soviet intervention -- are now substantially greater than they were even two days ago. (S)

2. At our 19 March monthly warning meeting, the Soviet assessment of the Reagan Administration was also discussed. While the Soviets harbor no illusions about the basic orientation of this Administration, they believe that it has not yet reached fundamental decisions on policy toward the USSR -- and they hope to influence these decisions. The current "peace offensive," and Brezhnev's conciliatory proposals at the CPSU Congress in February, were designed to have this effect. On the one hand, the Soviets have hopes of influencing US public opinion so as to constrain the Administration; and, on the other hand, they believe that despite the growing suspicion of Soviet intentions among West Europeans, concerns in that region over levels of defense spending and apprehension about the more forceful US posture can be played upon to divide the Atlantic community. (S)

3. We will continue to monitor developments in Poland closely, and convene unscheduled warning meetings whenever they may be required. (S)

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